

Utility Patent Application

CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

5 Patent Application based on: Docket No. 00-629
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VEHICLE LIFT RACK MOUNTED TOOL ORGANIZER

RELATED APPLICATIONS

The present invention is a continuation of U.S. Provisional Patent, Serial Number 60/174,986, filed on January 7, 2000. There are no other previously filed, nor currently any co-pending applications, anywhere in the world.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention

The present invention relates generally to organizers and tool caddies and, more particularly, to a tool organizer specifically adapted to be supported by the lift arms of a conventional vehicle lift rack.

2. Description of the Related Art

As anyone who performs a lot of mechanical work will attest, nothing

beats having the proper tool for a job. The proper tool can save time, save money, produce a higher quality job, reduce damage to equipment, and provide for the increased safety of the worker. However, many times keeping track of such a quantity of tools can become overwhelming. While toolboxes and storage bins go a long way to helping this situation during storage of the tool, it does not help while the tool is being utilized. Here the tool can become easily misplaced, dropped, roll under something or become damaged. Nowhere is this more evident than when working under a motor vehicle. Such locations are often cramped and not very well illuminated. It becomes even more important to keep track of a tool under these conditions.

A search of the prior art did not disclose any patents that read directly on the claims of the instant invention; however, the following patents disclose a ladder-mounted tool belt carrier: U.S. Patent no. **5,813,530** issued in the name of *Kornblatt*; and, U.S. Patent no. **5,649,623** issued in the name of *Kornblatt*.

Also, U.S. Patent no. **5,547,080** issued in the name of *Klimas* describes a scaffold-suspendable tool box..

The following patents all disclose the function and design of a wall-mounted tool organizer or caddy: U.S. Patent no. **4,895,334** issued in the name of *Bajek et al.*; U.S. Patent no. **D 390,056** issued in the name of *Pujals, Jr.*; and, U.S. Patent no. **D 340,824** issued in the name of *Pujals, Jr.*

U.S. Patent no. 5,535,882 issued in the name of *Liu* describes a tool case with a clip member for hanging on the user's belt.

U.S. Patent no. 4,773,535 issued in the name of *Cook* discloses a portable tool case that can be draped over a sawhorse.

5 U.S. Patent no. 3,980,217 issued in the name of *Yochum* describes a tool rack whose arms are bolted to a bumper of a vehicle.

And finally, U.S. Patent no. 1,094,009 issued in the name of *Parkhurst* describes a roll-type tool organizer carrier with a handle.

Consequently, a need exists for a means by which tools and/or parts can be held and organized while working under a motor vehicle held upon a vehicle lift.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Therefore, it is an object of the invention to indicate a device of the type disclosed above which avoids the disadvantages inherent in the state of the art. In particular, the device is to be a tool box caddy with extending arms/hangars for suspending the caddy from the rails of a vehicle lift.

Briefly described according to one embodiment of the present invention, an apparatus is provided that attaches to a vehicle lift while working under motor vehicles. It has a tray area for holding such items as parts or tools. Along the

front is an area with multiple holes of approximately three-quarters to one inch in diameter for holding items such as screwdrivers. Two "U" shaped arms protrude from the rear of the tray to attach the tray to the vehicle lift. The arms simply hook over the rack and the weight of the invention holds it into place. The arms

5 are adjustable so that they may fit any size rack on a vehicle lift. Finally, located on the side of the device is a beverage holder that can be used to hold a cup of coffee or a can of soda.

Advantages of the present invention are numerous, and include the ability to keep all necessary items close at hand, saving time and also aiding in safety, as the user will not accidentally bang or bump into objects while groping for a tool or part. The use of the present invention allows automotive mechanics to keep all parts, tools, and other necessities handy while working under a motor vehicle on a vehicle lift.

15 BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The advantages and features of the present invention will become better understood with reference to the following more detailed description and claims taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, in which like elements are identified with like symbols, and in which:

20 FIG. 1 is a perspective view of vehicle lift rack mounted tool organizer

according to the preferred embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 2 is a top view thereof;

FIG. 3a is a side elevational view thereof; and

FIG. 3b is a side elevational view thereof shown with an optional storage
5 drawer attached.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

1. Detailed Description of the Figures

Referring now to FIG. 1, a vehicle lift rack mounted tool organizer 10 is shown, according to the present invention, for use in mounted to the support arms 12 of an otherwise conventional vehicle lift rack 14. The organizer 10 includes a support means 16, shown herein a pair of support hooks, for grasping the rack arm 12 in a manner that allows the organizer 10 to be supported through gravity impingement, without the necessity for permanent fasteners. In this manner, it is anticipated that the hooks will be laterally adjustable in size, from between 3 inches to 5-1/2 inches in order to accommodate various standard makes of lift racks currently commercially available. Extending cantilever outward from the support means 16 in a manner that hangs below the horizontal level of the rack arm 12 is a main containment volume 20, formed in 15 an otherwise conventional boxlike fashion and having a hinged, lockable lid 22. 20

This containment volume has an anticipated use for holding various parts, fasteners, and the like used during the analysis, maintenance, and repair of automobiles.

Referring to FIG. 2 and 3a, various specialty features are anticipated as being elements of the best mode of the present invention. These include means for supporting pneumatic driving tools 30, means for supporting tools 33, shown as various sized orifices formed by a lateral support plate, as well as means for supporting cups 34, rags 36, and the like.

FIG. 3b shows an alternate embodiment of the present invention, in which a slidably retained storage drawer 40 is provided along the lower surface of the organizer 10, thereby allowing for additional storage.

2. Operation of the Preferred Embodiment

In operation, the present invention is to aid in the analysis, maintenance, and repair of motor vehicles. Currently, such activities are generally performed by lifting the motor vehicle overhead by use of a hydraulic lift rack. To aid in this activity, the present invention can be simply slide mounted over the lift rack arms. From there, a service technician can store and support tools, fasteners, parts, and the like in a convenience fashion.

As designed, a device embodying the teachings of the present invention is

easily applied. The foregoing description is included to illustrate the operation of the preferred embodiment and is not meant to limit the scope of the invention. As one can envision, an individual skilled in the relevant art, in conjunction with the present teachings, would be capable of incorporating many minor modifications that are anticipated within this disclosure. Therefore, the scope of the invention is to be broadly limited only by the following claims.

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